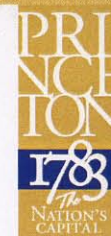


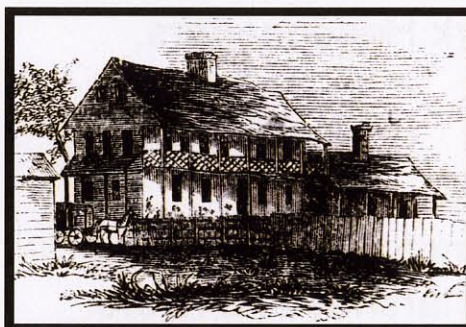
General George Washington & Tom Paine's Proof of Flammable Gas

Uncovering the eerie Marsh Will-o'-the-Wisp: It's A Gas! November 5th, 1783



The mysterious Will-O'-the-Wisp flame lured travelers into marshes.

Question: Was the flame due to Bituminous Matter or a Gas?



Washington stayed at Rockingham (pictured above) near the marshy Millstone river in Rocky Hill, NJ⁴

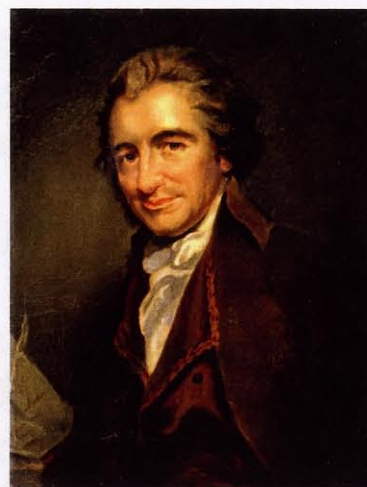
After the Revolutionary War, General George Washington stayed at Rockingham, Rocky Hill.

Washington and Thomas Paine investigated the Will-O'-the-Wisp.

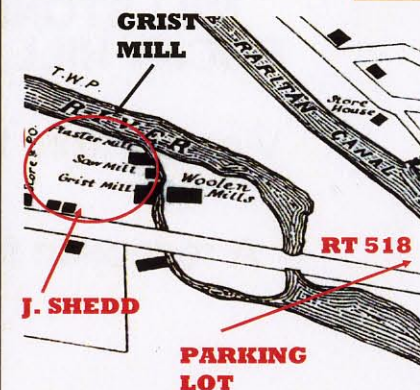
"On the Millstone River they held flames above the surface"



George Washington (1783) at Rockingham
William Dunlap, NJ artist¹



Thomas Paine (1792) copy Auguste Millière 1880²



The Millstone River Experiment near the Grist Mill
November, 1783

"When the mud at the bottom was disturbed by poles, the air bubbles rose fast, and I saw the fire take from General Washington's light... This was demonstrative evidence that .. setting the river on fire ... was due to an inflammable air that rose from the mud." Thomas Paine

The Will-O'-the-Wisp was a gas!

This original hands-on demonstration was by "President-to-be" George Washington and Tom Paine. Count Volta first performed this study at Lake Maggiore, Italy, 1776, but the likelihood of hearing of it during The Revolutionary War is considered remote.



Flames from Methane Gas - re-enactment ³

Courtesy: 1 Architect of the Capitol, Washington, DC, 2 National Portrait Gallery, London, UK, 3 American Society for Microbiology.

A RE-ENACTMENT

"IT'S A GAS"

GENERAL GEORGE WASHINGTON & THOMAS PAINE 1783

"THE MARSH WILL-O'-THE-WISP IS A GAS!"

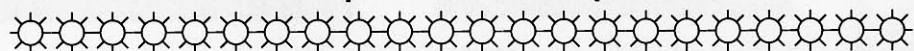
SITE OF EVENT:

**MILLSTONE RIVER, DELAWARE & RARITAN CANAL STATE PARK,
ROCKY HILL, NJ - Wednesday, 4.30 pm (dusk), NOVEMBER 5th, 2008**

Viewing from the Rt. 518 Bridge (north side) as it crosses the Millstone River

A reception follows - The Delaware and Raritan Canal Park Headquarters,
142 Mapleton Road, Kingston, NJ 08540.

5.30 p.m. to 6.30 p.m.



A re-enactment of the famous experiment by General George Washington and Thomas Paine of their discovery of the nature of the fiery Will-O'-the-Wisp of marshes and rivers.

Could the fiery Will-'O- of-the Wisp of marshes be due to bituminous matter or a gas? Washington and Paine took a scow onto the Millstone River and while holding blazing torches above the river surface, probed the river muds with poles. Bubbles rose and POOF there was a flash above the river. This proof was of a flammable gas and not bituminous matter such as turpentine from decaying vegetation. This was later shown to be the heating gas methane.

A classic early American Scientific Experiment.

Sponsor:

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